



Resisting Negative Peer Pressure

Key Text: Choose one of the texts from Wednesday’s portion of the lesson. Write it here and memorize it this week.

>>

1

Sunday

HERE’S WHAT I THINK

- >> You are at a party with your friends. One of them produces a lighter and a tea bag. She rolls it like a cigarette and “smokes” it. Your other friends try it too and invite you to join them. You hesitate. “It’s just tea. It’s not like you’re smoking a real cigarette,” they say. Do you agree with them? Why or why not? How do you respond?
- >> Log on to www.guidemagazine.org/rtf to post your responses. Be up-front and honest. Say what you think.

2

Monday

WHAT ARE THEY TRYING TO SAY?

Different people, different opinions. Some of the quotations below represent the views of true kingdom citizens; others may not. Can you tell the difference? How do these statements compare with what God is saying in His Word? After reviewing the texts in the God Says . . . portion of the lesson, write a statement that captures your belief. Be prepared to quote yourself at Sabbath School.

- >> “An insincere and evil friend is more to be feared than a wild beast; a wild beast may wound your body, but an evil friend will wound your mind.”—*Siddhartha Gautama Buddha, founder of Buddhism about 500 B.C.*
- >> “Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.”—*Ralph Waldo Emerson, 19th-century U.S. essayist, poet, philosopher.*
- >> “He who joyfully marches in rank and file has already earned my contempt. He has been given a large brain by mistake, since for him the spinal cord would fully suffice.”—*Albert Einstein, 20 th-century U.S. (German-born) physicist.*
- >> “When push comes to shove, think independently.”—*Charles Swindoll, current U.S. author and pastor.*
- >> “He that lies with the dogs, riseth with fleas.”—*George Herbert, 17th-century English poet.*
- >> “No doubt another may also think for me; but it is not therefore desirable that he should do so to the exclusion of my thinking for myself.”—*Henry David Thoreau, 19th-century U.S. writer.*
- >> “Since you are like no other being ever created since the beginning of time, you are incomparable.”—*Brenda Ueland, 20th-century U.S. writer.*
- >> “We’re decision-making animals, every one of us.”—*Jennifer James, current U.S. cultural anthropologist, author, columnist.*

Write your own quotation.

What I say is . . .

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WHAT STINKS?

(What connection do you think the following illustration has with the Bible texts on the other page?)

Josh, Gregory, and Seth were in their next to the last year of high school. They were good students. They were also mischievous. They played high-spirited pranks on one another and on their classmates. Two days before school was out they had finished their final exams and were feeling restless. Seth said, “We should do something really crazy tomorrow. No one will know it’s us because they will think it’s someone who is graduating.”

“What should we do?” asked Josh.

“Why don’t we put something really stinky in the vents and we’ll stink up the school so badly, we’ll have to get out early,” replied Seth.

“I don’t know,” said Gregory. “That might not be such a good idea.”

“Don’t be such a spoilsport,” said Seth. “No one will ever find out. It will be fun.”

“We won’t be hurting anyone,” said Josh. “Besides, everyone needs a good laugh. They’re all tense from studying for finals.”

“Well, I guess,” said Gregory.

“C’mon, Greg,” chided Seth. “You’re not bailing out on us now. It’s almost the last day of school. Even if we get caught—which we won’t—what could they do to us?”

“OK,” said Gregory. “I’ll do it.”

The boys made plans to go to the fish market and get chum, frozen fish scraps. That night they snuck into the school. Taking their cooler of chum with them, they went all over the school placing pieces of it in desks, lockers, cabinets, vents, fans, ceiling tiles, tissue dispensers. Within an hour it was everywhere.

The next day when they arrived at school everyone was complaining about the smell, but no one seemed to know where it was coming from. That is, until some people opened their lockers and their desks. Their classmates screamed and cried at what they found. Seth, Gregory, and Josh just played along, but they were laughing inside.

Things got worse at lunch time. The chum the boys had placed in the ceiling tiles melted and fell down on a group of students trying to eat their lunch. Everyone lost their appetite. Then as the day got hotter, the smell became worse. Students started gagging and becoming sick to their stomachs.

The headmistress made an announcement asking whoever had played the prank to report to the office. Assuming that students who were graduating had done it, she sharply criticized them. Still the three said nothing. The smell and fumes became so bad that school was dismissed early.

Word got out about the prank and suddenly all the radio stations were talking about it. Seth was listening to the radio as the announcers were discussing who would have done such a thing. Seth got excited and called the station, confessing that he and his friends had done it. He had even thought up a fake name to give if they asked who he was, but he accidentally said his own name. The announcer repeated his name on the air. Seth knew he was in trouble.

The next day as soon as he got to school, Seth was called to the principal’s office. He was encouraged to name his accomplices, but he refused. He was shocked when a few minutes later a police officer arrived. Seth was charged with a crime that went on his record. Although he could have been sent to juvenile jail, he was instead sentenced to helping the janitor clean up the mess. In addition he had to spend his summer doing community service projects. And he never did get to the beach or the mountains. To his credit, he took full responsibility for his actions and never told that his friends were involved.



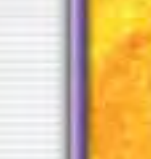
Tuesday
SO WHAT?

- >> Peer pressure is that state of being influenced by people in your age or social group. Many Bible characters experienced peer pressure. Think about Samson (**Judges 13-16**). He hung out with the wrong crowd, the Philistines. His girlfriend was a Philistine. She pressured him into telling the secret of his strength, and he lost not only his strength but his freedom. Blind and alone, he started to think about God and his family. In time God gave him back his strength and he was able to behave like the warrior of Israel that God had intended him to be.
- >> Peter experienced peer pressure. He was ashamed of being a follower of Christ so he tried to behave like all the other people gathered to watch Jesus’ humiliation during His trial at the high priest’s house (**Luke 22:54-62**). Later Peter felt so bad that he became an awesome force for good and for God. He then exerted positive peer pressure on others. As an agent of God’s kingdom, you are called, in the Spirit’s power, to resist negative peer pressure and to exert positive peer pressure.



Thursday
WHAT DOES THIS
HAVE TO DO WITH ME?

- >> Peer pressure is a fact of life. Even adults have to deal with it. It never really goes away. The thing you can do about peer pressure is to know how to handle it. One thing you can do is to know exactly how God made you to function best. Then know yourself; know what is important to you, and what you believe in.
- >> Another thing is to know whose you are. You are a child of God and an agent of the kingdom. As such you have to adhere to a higher standard and be faithful to God and what He asks you to do.
- >> A very practical thing you can do to resist negative peer pressure is to surround yourself with positive people who not only believe as you do, but who also put their beliefs into practice and encourage you to do the same. A final thing you can do is to practice responses to some of the things your peers may ask you to do. It’s easier to say “no” when you’ve done it a number of times—even if it has been in the privacy of your own room!



Friday
HOW DOES IT WORK?

- >> Go to a search engine such as Google, type in “peer pressure quiz” and see if you can find one to take just for fun.
- >> According to the anti-drug Web site of the Do It Now Foundation, there are five steps to every decision. The first letter of each step spells out the word IDEAL. Thinking these steps out ahead of time, asking God to give you wisdom, is the ideal way to make positive decisions when you are faced with negative peer pressure. Try it with some situations you know you will probably face.

Identify the problem situation you are faced with.
Describe some possible actions you could take.
Evaluate those ideas. Which one is the best?
Act out the plan you decide on.
Learn for the future.



Wednesday
GOD SAYS . . .

- >> **Psalm 133:1 (NCV)**
“It is good and pleasant when God’s people live together in peace!”
- >> **Psalm 1:1 (NCV)**
“Happy are those who don’t listen to the wicked, who don’t go where sinners go, who don’t do what evil people do.”
- >> **Proverbs 1:10, 11, 15 (NIV)**
“If sinners entice you, do not give in to them. If they say, ‘Come along with us’; . . . do not go along with them, do not set foot on their paths.”
- >> **Proverbs 17:17 (NLT)**
“A friend is always loyal, and a brother is born to help in time of need.”
- >> **Proverbs 18:24 (NLT)**
“There are ‘friends’ who destroy each other, but a real friend sticks closer than a brother.”
- >> **Romans 12:2 (The Bible in Basic English)**
“And let not your behaviour be like that of this world, but be changed and be made new in mind, so that by experience you may have knowledge of the good and pleasing and complete purpose of God.”



- >> Try describing IDEAL behavior for the following situations. Remember to include prayer for strength and guidance before, after, and all the way through the steps.

1. Your teammates want you to skip church to play in an exhibition game for charity. The winning team gets to name the amount of money that will go to help children orphaned by AIDS. Your teammates say they can’t win without you; besides, it’s for a good cause.

2. Your cousin invites you to spend the night at her house. Her parents call to say that they will be late returning home from a meeting because they have car trouble. She invites some neighbor boys over, although she knows she isn’t supposed to have guests when her parents aren’t home.

3. In your home the rule is: No tattoos. No piercings. No jewelry. But your best friend’s sister’s boyfriend’s uncle is a tattoo artist. Your best friend says, “He can sign the permission slips and give us the tattoo or pierce our navels. The tattoo can be really small and it won’t be in a place where anyone will see it. You always cover your stomach anyway, so no one will ever see your naval ring. And my sister will pay for everything. She gets a discount.”

